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UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL

Atty. Docket No.

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First Inventor or Appl. Identifier

Neil G. Jacobson

Title

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR RUNTIME REALLOCATION
OF PLD RESOURCES

(Only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 CFR 1.53(b))

Express Mail Label No.

EL539650972US

APPLICATION ELEMENTS

See MPEP chapter 600 concerning utility patent application contents.

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1. ☒ *Fee Transmittal Form (e.g., PTO/SB/17)
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2. ☒ Specification [Total Pages **21**]
(preferred arrangement set forth below)

- Descriptive title of the Invention
- Cross References to Related Applications
- Statement Regarding Fed sponsored R & D
- Reference to Microfiche Appendix
- Background of the Invention
- Brief Summary of the Invention
- Brief Description of the Drawings (if filed)
- Detailed Description
- Claim(s)
- Abstract of the Disclosure

3. ☒ Drawing(s) (35 USC 113) [Total Sheets **5**]

4. Oath or Declaration [Total Pages **2**]

- a. ☒ Newly executed (original or copy)
- b. ☐ Copy from a prior application (37 CFR §1.63(d))
(for continuation/divisional with Box 16 completed)
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6. ☐ Nucleotide and/or Amino Acid Sequence Submission
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7. ☒ Assignment Papers (cover sheet & document(s))

8. ☐ 37 CFR §3.73(b) Statement (when there is an assignee) ☐ Power of Attorney

9. ☐ English Translation Document (if applicable)

10. ☐ Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)/PTO-1449 ☐ Copies of IDS Citations

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12. ☒ Return Receipt Postcard (MPEP 503)
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1 SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR RUNTIME
2 REALLOCATION OF PLD RESOURCES

3 Neil G. Jacobson

4
5 FIELD OF THE INVENTION

6 The present invention generally relates to runtime
7 reconfigurable systems, and more particularly to runtime
8 reallocation of PLD resources in response to changing
9 activity levels.

10
11 BACKGROUND

12 The field of reconfigurable computing has advanced
13 steadily for the past decade, using programmable logic
14 devices (PLDs) as the basis for high-performance
15 reconfigurable systems. Run-Time Reconfigurable (RTR)
16 systems distinguish themselves by performing circuit logic
17 customization at run-time. RTR systems using PLDs are
18 expected to result in systems that require less hardware,
19 less software, and fewer input/output resources than
20 traditional ASIC or PLD-based systems.

21 In multiprocessor data processing systems, various
22 systems are known for balancing the work load between the
23 processors. An advantage to such systems is that the
24 functions implemented by the system can be software
25 controlled, thereby providing great flexibility. However,
26 such systems tend to be large, expensive, and complex.
27 Furthermore, software-implemented functions tend to be
28 slower than hardware implementations.

29 A system and method that address the aforementioned
30 problems, as well as other related problems, are therefore
31 desirable.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A system and method for allocating resources of programmable logic devices (PLDs) according to the activity levels of the functions implemented on the PLDs are provided. A load monitor surveys the activity levels of the functions implemented on the PLDs. When decreasing and/or increasing activity levels are detected, the PLD resources are reallocated between the various functions in proportion to the decreasing and/or increasing activity levels.

In another embodiment, a reserve of PLD resources is maintained. When the activity level of one or more functions is increasing and none of the other functions have decreasing activity levels, some portion of the reserve is allocated to the functions having increasing activity levels.

Various other embodiments are set forth in the Detailed Description and Claims which follow.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a functional block diagram of a system 100 having control logic for reconfiguration of PLD resources and load monitoring of different functions that are implemented on one or more PLDs, in accordance with one embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 2 is a flowchart of a process for monitoring the activity level of the functions implemented on the PLD(s).

FIG. 3A is a flowchart of a process for determining the levels at which PLD resources should be reallocated between a number of functions when it is detected that the activity level for one of the functions is decreasing.

FIG. 3B is a flowchart of a process for determining the levels at which PLD resources should be allocated from the reserve of resources when the activity level of a function is increasing.

FIG. 4 is a flowchart of a process for controlling reconfiguration of PLDs in response to control parameters from the load monitor.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

In various embodiments, the invention monitors the activity level of various functions that are implemented on one or more PLDs. When the activity level of a function has decreased, a determination is made as to whether PLD resources of the function should be reprogrammed for another function. If so, the PLD resources are reprogrammed accordingly.

FIG. 1 is a functional block diagram of a system 100 having control logic for reconfiguration of PLD resources and load monitoring of different functions that are implemented on one or more PLDs, in accordance with one embodiment of the invention. The system includes one or more PLDs 102 that implement different functions, a storage element 104 for storing one or more configuration bitstreams 106 that program the PLD(s) to implement the functions, a configuration control element 108, and a load monitor 110.

The invention is applicable to systems having any of a variety of PLDs, for example FPGAs or CPLDs, where the particular function and the resources available on the PLD will determine the number of PLDs required. Partial reconfigurability of the PLD will also influence the number PLDs in the system. For example, the Virtex FPGA from Xilinx supports partial reconfiguration. Therefore, multiple functions may be implemented on a Virtex FPGA, depending on the resource requirements of the different functions. If it is determined that FPGA resources should

1 be taken from one function and devoted to another function,
2 the FPGA can be partially reconfigured for the reallocation
3 of resources.

4 The different functions are implemented with
5 associated configuration bitstreams. For example,
6 configuration bitstream 106 implements a first function,
7 configuration bitstream 112 implements a second function,
8 configuration bitstream 114 implements a third function,
9 and configuration bitstream 116 implements an *n*th function.

10 In one embodiment, storage 104 for the configuration
11 bitstreams may include one or more in-system memory
12 elements. In another embodiment, the configuration
13 bitstreams may be stored outside the system on network
14 storage, for example. Those skilled in the art will
15 recognize other suitable storage alternatives for different
16 application requirements.

17 Load monitor 110 is coupled to the PLDs for monitoring
18 the activity level of the functions. For example, the PLDs
19 may implement a plurality of communications channels,
20 wherein different ones of the channels are dedicated to
21 different protocols. If the traffic on the channels
22 implementing a first protocol has decreased and the traffic
23 on the channels implementing a second protocol has
24 increased, some of the channels for the first protocol may
25 be reallocated for the second protocol. The load monitor
26 not only detects the need for reprogramming but also
27 determines which PLD resources should be reprogrammed.
28 Load monitor 110 also signals the functions implemented on
29 the PLDs when a reconfiguration is to occur so that work-
30 in-process can be finished or reassigned.

31 The mechanism by which load monitor 110 monitors the
32 activity levels of the different functions can be adapted

1 in accordance with the requirements of the application.
2 For example, the functions may be designed with a feature
3 for reporting the activity levels via an output port of the
4 PLDs. Alternatively, registers internal to the PLDs and
5 readable by the load monitor may be used for storing the
6 current activity levels.

7 In order to reconfigure PLD resources, load monitor
8 110 must track which functions are implemented on which PLD
9 resources. Furthermore, if the different functions require
10 different types and numbers of PLD resources, those too
11 must be tracked by the load monitor.

12 Configuration control element 108 is coupled to load
13 monitor 110, storage 104, and to the PLDs 102. When
14 reprogramming is requested by the load monitor,
15 configuration control 108 signals the selected PLD(s) and
16 initiates transfer of the selected configuration
17 bitstream(s) from storage 104 to the appropriate PLD(s).
18 It will be appreciated that the logic of load monitor 110
19 and configuration control element 108 could be integrated
20 into a single device in another embodiment. The particular
21 distribution of functionality between load monitor 110 and
22 configuration control element 108, as well as the
23 particular communication links to PLDs 102, can be tailored
24 for specific application requirements.

25
26 FIG. 2 is a flowchart of a process for monitoring the
27 activity level of the functions implemented on the PLD(s).
28 The process generally entails performing an initial
29 allocation of PLD resources between the functions and an
30 initial configuration of the PLDs and then monitoring
31 activity levels of the functions and reconfiguring the PLDs
32 as necessary.

1 At step 152, an initial allocation of PLD resources is
2 selected for the various functions. For example, in an
3 application such as a communications switch, certain
4 numbers of channels may be dedicated to different
5 communications protocols. Thirty-two channels may be
6 dedicated to protocol A, 64 channels may be dedicated to
7 each of protocols B and C, and so on. Thus, the load
8 monitor determines the number of channels to devote to each
9 of the protocols.

10 Each channel maps to a set of PLD resources. In one
11 embodiment, not all resources are initially allocated. For
12 example, 10% of the total channels are not allocated to any
13 protocol and are held as a reserve of resources for peak
14 activity levels. At step 154, the configuration control is
15 signaled to begin the initial configuration. The load
16 monitor provides the configuration control with information
17 identifying which PLD resources are to be configured with
18 which configuration bitstreams. The manner in which PLD
19 resources and configuration bitstreams are identified will
20 depend on the specific functions and the capabilities of
21 the particular PLD. Furthermore, if a single PLD supports
22 more than one function, then a number of configuration
23 bitstreams may be required to cover the possible
24 combinations for allocating resources of the PLD between
25 the different functions.

26 Once the PLDs have been configured and the system is
27 operational, at step 156, the load monitor establishes
28 communications with the functions on the PLDs. At step
29 158, the load monitor begins monitoring the activity levels
30 of the functions. The load monitor samples (step 160) the
31 activity levels every t interval of time for each function.
32 A typical measure of activity level for a communications

1 protocol channel is the number of packets processed per
2 second. If a protocol is supported across multiple
3 channels, the activity level is the total activity across
4 all the channels implementing the protocol.

5 Decision step 162 tests whether the activity level of
6 any of the functions is decreasing. When a function shows
7 a decreasing activity level over n samples and the overall
8 decrease is greater than a given threshold, some of the
9 resources allocated to the function are freed for re-
10 allocation to other applications. The value of n and the
11 threshold level are chosen so that reallocation is not
12 performed in response to random and instantaneous changes.
13 Each function may have a different threshold that varies
14 based on the number of resources allocated to the function
15 since functions having greater numbers of resources will be
16 able to accommodate greater activity levels. In various
17 embodiments, the functions implemented on the PLDs are
18 programmed to periodically report activity levels to the
19 load monitor either via an on-board PLD register or by
20 transmission to the load monitor.

21 Step 164 determines how resources are to be
22 reallocated between the functions implemented on the PLDs
23 (FIG. 3A describes how the reallocated resource levels are
24 determined for decreasing activity levels). At step 166,
25 the load monitor signals the PLD(s) that will be
26 reconfigured to complete work-in-process prior to
27 reconfiguration. The work may be completed by virtue of
28 finishing the work or transferring the work to a different
29 resource (e.g., another PLD that will not be reconfigured).
30 For I/O tasks on resources to be freed, a number of steps
31 are performed:

1 1. The output ports from the resources to be freed are
2 connected to output ports of another resource that
3 implements the same function. For example, if
4 channels A and B both implement protocol 1 and the
5 resources from channel A are to be freed, the output
6 ports of channel A are connected to unassigned
7 output ports of channel B, or if time-slicing is
8 used, to outputs of channel B having unused
9 capacity.

10 2. Direct input data from the resource to be freed to
11 another resource that implements the same function.
12 For example, (continuing the example of step 1) the
13 input data directed at channel A is redirected to
14 the input ports of channel B.

15 3. Disable the output ports of the resource to be
16 freed.

17 4. Disable the input ports of the resource to be freed.

18
19 The connection and redirection of inputs and outputs can
20 best be facilitated by either special I/O circuitry (for
21 example, a crossbar switch), or a PLD reconfigured to re-
22 map input and output connections.

23 At step 168, the configuration control element is
24 signaled to begin the reconfiguration. The PLD resources
25 that are reconfigured are those identified at step 164.

26 If decision step 162 finds that none of the functions
27 have decreasing activity levels, the process is directed to
28 decision step 172 to test whether any of the functions have
29 increasing activity levels. If there are no functions
30 having decreasing or increasing activity levels, the
31 process returns to sampling the activity levels at step
32 160.

1 If any of the functions are detected as having
2 increased activity levels, the process is directed to step
3 174. When a function shows an increasing activity level
4 over n samples and the overall increase is greater than a
5 given threshold, resources from the reserve are allocated to
6 the function(s). The values of n and the threshold level
7 are chosen so that reallocation is not performed in
8 response to random and instantaneous changes. The
9 thresholds associated with increasing activity levels may
10 be different from the thresholds associated with decreasing
11 activity levels, and each function may have a different
12 threshold that varies based on the number of resources
13 allocated to the function since functions having greater
14 numbers of resources will be able to accommodate greater
15 activity levels.

16 At step 174, it is determined how resources from the
17 reserve are to be allocated to the function(s) (FIG. 3B
18 describes how the reallocated resource levels are
19 determined for increasing activity levels). The process
20 then continues at step 168 as described above.

21
22 FIG. 3A is a flowchart of a process for determining
23 the levels at which PLD resources should be reallocated
24 between a number of functions when the activity level of a
25 function is decreasing. The number of resources to free
26 from a function is determined at step 202 and is based on
27 the following model. Each resource can service a maximum
28 load of R_L for its given function. Thus, if M resources are
29 assigned to a function, then the maximum sustainable
30 activity level is $M \cdot R_L$. If the load monitor determines that
31 the activity level has decreased such that a current
32 activity level = $(M-P) \cdot R_L$ ($P \leq M$), then the $(P-1)$ resources

1 are freed (one is left in reserve with the function). At
2 step 204, the number of resources of the function is
3 reduced by the amount determined at step 202. For example,
4 the number of channels that implement a particular protocol
5 is reduced.

6 Decision step 206 determines whether the freed
7 resources should be allocated to other functions or held in
8 reserve. The decision is made based on a projection of
9 future activity levels of the other functions. The
10 projection can be linear, least squares, or another
11 technique that best models the overall system behavior.
12 In one embodiment, the projection is made based on past
13 behavior. Sample activity levels are taken by the load
14 monitor. The values associated with the activity levels
15 are stored over a sufficiently long window of time. The
16 length of the window is based on the usage environment.
17 Past performance is modeled statistically to predict future
18 behavior. If the predicted future behavior is either a
19 decrease or increase in the activity level, then
20 reconfiguration and re-assignment may be initiated.

21 At step 208, the allocation of freed resources to
22 functions is determined based on the projected,
23 proportional needs of the functions. For example, if the
24 activity level of a first function is projected to increase
25 by 30% and the activity level of a second function is
26 projected to increase by 10%, then the ratio of the
27 projected increases is used when making the allocation.
28 Assuming both the first and second functions begin with the
29 same initial resource allocation, then the first function
30 will be allocated three-fourths of the resources and the
31 second function is allocated one-fourth of the resources.

1 If none of the activity levels is increasing, decision
2 step 206 directs control to step 210, and the freed
3 resources are added to the reserve of free resources.
4 Parameters that describe the resources to allocate to the
5 different functions are then returned to the process of
6 FIG. 2.

7
8 FIG. 3B is a flowchart of a process for determining
9 the levels at which PLD resources should be allocated from
10 the reserve when the activity level of a function is
11 increasing. At step 222, the number of resources to remove
12 from the reserve and allocate to the one or more functions
13 is determined.

14 The allocation of resources takes into account the
15 increasing needs of the entire system (i.e., across
16 multiple functions). The allocation process also ensures
17 that the entire reserve is not depleted so that future
18 increased activity levels can be handled. In one
19 embodiment, the following model is used to manage the
20 reserve of resources:

- 21 1. The load monitor tracks the total percentage of
22 resources allocated to each function and the
23 percentage of resources presently in the reserve. The
24 total of all allocated resources is 100%
25 ($R_1 + R_2 + R_3 + R_4 + \dots + R_{\text{RESERVE}} = 100\%$, where R_x is the percent
26 resources allocated to function X).
- 27 2. The load monitor tracks the predicted increase (or
28 decrease) of resources for each function. Each
29 predicted increase (or decrease) is represented as a
30 percentage of the current resources allocated to a
31 function.

1 When allocating from the reserve, a percentage of the
2 reserve is maintained for future allocations. The portion
3 of the reserve maintained for future allocations can be
4 established as a fixed percentage or a sliding percentage
5 that varies as a function of the activity levels of all the
6 functions, for example, a smaller percentage when the
7 functions are more active and a larger percentage when the
8 functions are less active. The resources in the reserve
9 will slowly decline to zero as the system reaches its
10 saturation capacity. When the reserve is empty, only
11 decreases in the activity levels of functions can trigger
12 reallocations.

13 Resources are proportionally allocated from the
14 reserve based on the projected increased activity levels of
15 the functions. In addition, functions having the greatest
16 projected increase are considered first. For example, if
17 function A's activity level is projected to increase 30%,
18 function B's 20%, function C's 10%, and 50 units of the
19 reserve are eligible to allocate, then function A should
20 maximally get 25 units ($1/2 * 50$ units), function B should
21 maximally get 17 units ($1/3 * 50$), and function C should
22 maximally get 8 units ($1/6 * 50$).

23 After the maximum allocations have been established,
24 the allocations and assignment priority are evaluated
25 against the actual predicted unit increase. For example,
26 if function A is projected to have a 30% increase but
27 currently has 10 resource units, then an allocation of 3
28 units rather than 25 would suffice. Thus, function A is
29 allocated the 3 units and the difference is left in the
30 reserve and eligible for allocation. This allows
31 allocation to function B to be as much as needed.

1 The proportional allocation is then redone as between
2 functions B and C using the eligible 47 units ($50 - 3$).
3 Since function B's projected increase was 20% and function
4 C's projected increase was 10%, function B may be
5 proportionally allocated 32 units ($\sim(2/3 * 47)$), and
6 function C may be allocated 15 units ($47 - 32$). However,
7 if function B is currently allocated 400 units, then a 20%
8 projected increase implies that an additional 80 units may
9 be required ($20\% * 400$). However our rule allows only 32
10 to be allocated. We note however that more were actually
11 requested and that as many as an additional (80-32) or 48
12 could be used. If C is currently allocated 10 units, then
13 a projected 10% increase implies the allocation of 1 unit
14 ($10\% * 10$). This means that now ($47-32-1$) or 14 units
15 remain.

16 If any of the functions were allocated fewer resources
17 than called for by the projection of increased activity
18 level (for example, function B) and not all of the eligible
19 resources were allocated in the first pass, then the
20 process described above is repeated for those functions
21 having projected activity levels that exceed the resources
22 allocated in the first pass. In the present example only
23 function B has an outstanding request for 48 units, and 14
24 units remain eligible for allocation. Thus, the 14 units
25 are allocated to function B, leaving a deficiency of 34
26 units ($80 - (32 + 14)$).

27 It will be appreciated that the inability to allocate
28 sufficient resources to meet the projected need may or may
29 not impact performance levels of the functions. If the
30 projected increased activity levels are not reached, there
31 is no impact on performance levels of the functions. If
32 the projections were accurate and a function was not

1 allocated all the resources necessary to meet the
2 projections, then the performance level of the functions
3 may be impaired.

4 After the selected resources of the PLD have been
5 reconfigured in accordance with the selected allocation of
6 resources, the load monitor continues to sample activity.

7 At step 224, the number of resources maintained in the
8 reserve is reduced by the amount determined at step 222.
9 For example, the number of channels that implement a
10 particular protocol is reduced.

11 At step 228, the allocation of resources removed from
12 the reserve amongst one or more functions is determined
13 based on the projected, proportional activity levels of the
14 functions. The projected activity levels and proportional
15 allocation are determined as described above in association
16 with FIG. 3A. Parameters that describe the resources to
17 allocate to the different functions are then returned to
18 the process of FIG. 2.

19
20 FIG. 4 is a flowchart of a process for controlling
21 reconfiguration of PLDs in response to control parameters
22 from the load monitor.

23 At step 252, one or more configuration bitstreams are
24 selected in response to the signals from the load monitor.
25 The particular configuration bitstreams that are selected
26 will depend on the PLD resources to be reconfigured and the
27 selected functions.

28 At step 254, the PLD resources that are to be
29 reconfigured are selected.

30 The selected configuration bitstreams are then
31 downloaded to the PLDs at step 256.

1 At step 258, the reconfigured PLDs are restarted with
2 the reprogrammed functions.

3 Finally, at step 260 the load monitor is signaled that
4 the reconfiguration is complete.

5 The present invention is believed to be applicable to
6 a variety of systems having a plurality of PLD-implemented
7 functions. Other aspects and embodiments of the present
8 invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art from
9 consideration of the specification and practice of the
10 invention disclosed herein. It is intended that the
11 specification and illustrated embodiments be considered as
12 examples only, with a true scope and spirit of the
13 invention being indicated by the following claims.

14

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for allocating resources of one or more programmable logic devices (PLDs) to a plurality of functions in a system having one or more PLDs on which the functions are implemented, comprising:

monitoring activity levels of the functions;

detecting when the activity level of a first function is decreasing;

selecting a subset of PLD resources that implement the first function;

selecting a configuration bitstream for implementing a second function; and

reconfiguring the subset of PLD resources implementing the first function with the configuration bitstream of the second function.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising periodically sampling the activity levels of the functions.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising determining whether the activity level of the first function is decreasing after the steps of sampling the activity levels of the functions a selected number of times.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

detecting when the activity levels of the second and a third function are increasing;

allocating the subset of PLD resources between the second and third functions in proportion to a ratio of increasing activity levels between the second and third functions;

selecting a configuration bitstream for implementing a third function, wherein the configuration bitstreams for implementing the second and third functions proportionally

1 allocate the subset of PLD resources in proportion to the
2 ratio of increasing activity levels; and
3 reconfiguring the subset of PLD resources with the
4 configuration bitstreams of the second and third function.
5

6 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

7 wherein the subset of PLD resources implementing the
8 first function is reconfigured with the configuration
9 bitstream of the second function only if the activity level
10 of the second function is increasing; and

11 if none of the functions have increasing activity
12 levels, then reconfiguring the subset of PLD resources with
13 a predetermined configuration bitstream and adding the
14 subset of PLD resources to a reserve of PLD resources.
15

16 6. The method of claim 5, further comprising, if none of
17 the functions have decreasing activity levels, then
18 detecting whether any of the functions have increasing
19 activity levels, and for functions having increasing
20 activity levels, allocating a subset of PLD resources from
21 the reserve of PLD resources to the functions having
22 increasing activity levels and reconfiguring the subset of
23 PLD resources from the reserve of PLD resources with
24 configuration bitstreams that implement the functions having
25 increasing activity levels.
26

27 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the configuration
28 bitstreams for implementing the functions having increasing
29 activity levels proportionally allocate the subset of PLD
30 resources from the reserve in proportion to a ratio of
31 increasing activity levels.
32

33 8. A method for allocating resources of one or more
34 programmable logic devices (PLDs) to a plurality of
35 functions in a system having one or more PLDs on which the
36 functions are implemented, comprising:

1 allocating a first portion of total PLD resources to a
2 reserve of PLD resources and a second portion of PLD
3 resources to the plurality of functions;

4 configuring the second portion of PLD resources with
5 configuration bitstreams that implement the plurality of
6 functions, wherein the second portion of PLD resources are
7 allocated between the functions in a selected ratio;

8 monitoring activity levels of the functions; and

9 if the activity level of a first function is decreasing
10 and the activity levels of one or more other functions are
11 increasing, then selecting a subset of PLD resources that
12 implement the first function and reconfiguring the subset of
13 PLD resources with one or more configuration bitstreams that
14 implement the one or more other functions, wherein the
15 configuration bitstreams for implementing the functions
16 having increasing activity levels proportionally allocate
17 the subset of PLD resources from the first function in
18 proportion to a ratio of increasing activity levels.

19
20 9. The method of claim 8, further comprising:

21 if none of the functions has a decreasing activity
22 level and the activity levels of one or more other functions
23 are increasing, then selecting a subset of PLD resources
24 from the reserve of PLD resources and reconfiguring the
25 subset of PLD resources from the reserve with one or more
26 configuration bitstreams that implement the one or more
27 other functions, wherein the configuration bitstreams for
28 implementing the functions having increasing activity levels
29 proportionally allocate the subset of PLD resources from the
30 reserve in proportion to a ratio of increasing activity
31 levels.

32
33 10. The method of claim 9, further comprising:

34 periodically sampling the activity levels of the
35 functions; and

1 wherein the activity level of the first function is
2 considered to be decreasing if sampled activity levels over
3 a selected period of time are less than a selected
4 threshold.

5
6 11. The method of claim 10, wherein the activity level of a
7 function is considered to be increasing if sampled activity
8 levels over a selected period of time are greater than a
9 selected threshold.

10
11 12. The method of claim 8, further comprising:
12 periodically sampling the activity levels of the
13 functions; and

14 wherein the activity level of the first function is
15 considered to be decreasing if sampled activity levels over
16 a selected period of time are less than a selected
17 threshold.

18
19 13. A reconfigurable system comprising:
20 a plurality of programmable logic devices (PLDs);
21 a storage element coupled to the PLDs and having stored
22 therein a plurality of configuration bitstreams, wherein
23 each configuration bitstream implements a different
24 function;

25 a load monitor coupled to the PLDs, wherein the load
26 monitor is configured and arranged to monitor respective
27 activity levels of the functions implemented on the PLDs,
28 select a subset of PLD resources for reconfiguration, and
29 generate allocation signals for reconfiguring the subset of
30 PLD resources proportional to the respective activity
31 levels; and

32 a configuration control element coupled to the load
33 monitor, the PLDs, and the storage element, the
34 configuration control element configured and arranged to
35 reconfigure the PLDs with the configuration bitstreams
36 responsive to the allocation signals.

1
2 14. An apparatus for allocating resources of one or more
3 programmable logic devices (PLDs) to a plurality of
4 functions in a system having one or more PLDs on which the
5 functions are implemented, comprising:
6 means for monitoring activity levels of the functions;
7 means for detecting when the activity level of a first
8 function is decreasing;
9 means for selecting a subset of PLD resources that
10 implement the first function;
11 means for selecting a configuration bitstream for
12 implementing a second function; and
13 means for reconfiguring the subset of PLD resources
14 implementing the first function with the configuration
15 bitstream of the second function.
16

1 SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR RUNTIME
2 REALLOCATION OF PLD RESOURCES

3 Neil G. Jacobson

4
5 ABSTRACT

6 A system and method for allocating resources of
7 programmable logic devices (PLDs) according to activity
8 level. In various embodiments, the activity levels of
9 functions implemented on the PLDs are monitored. When
10 decreasing and/or increasing activity levels are detected,
11 the PLD resources are reallocated between the various
12 functions in proportion to the decreasing and/or increasing
13 activity levels.

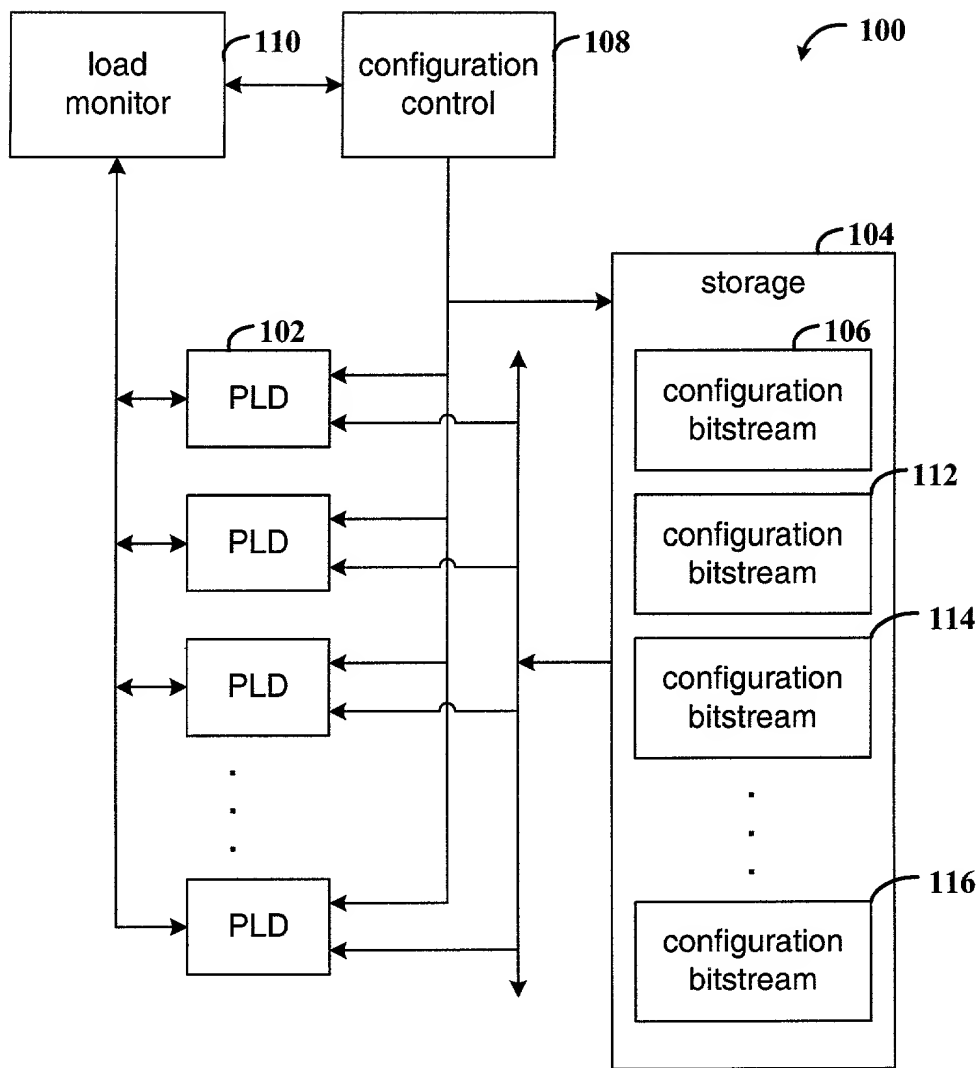


FIG. 1

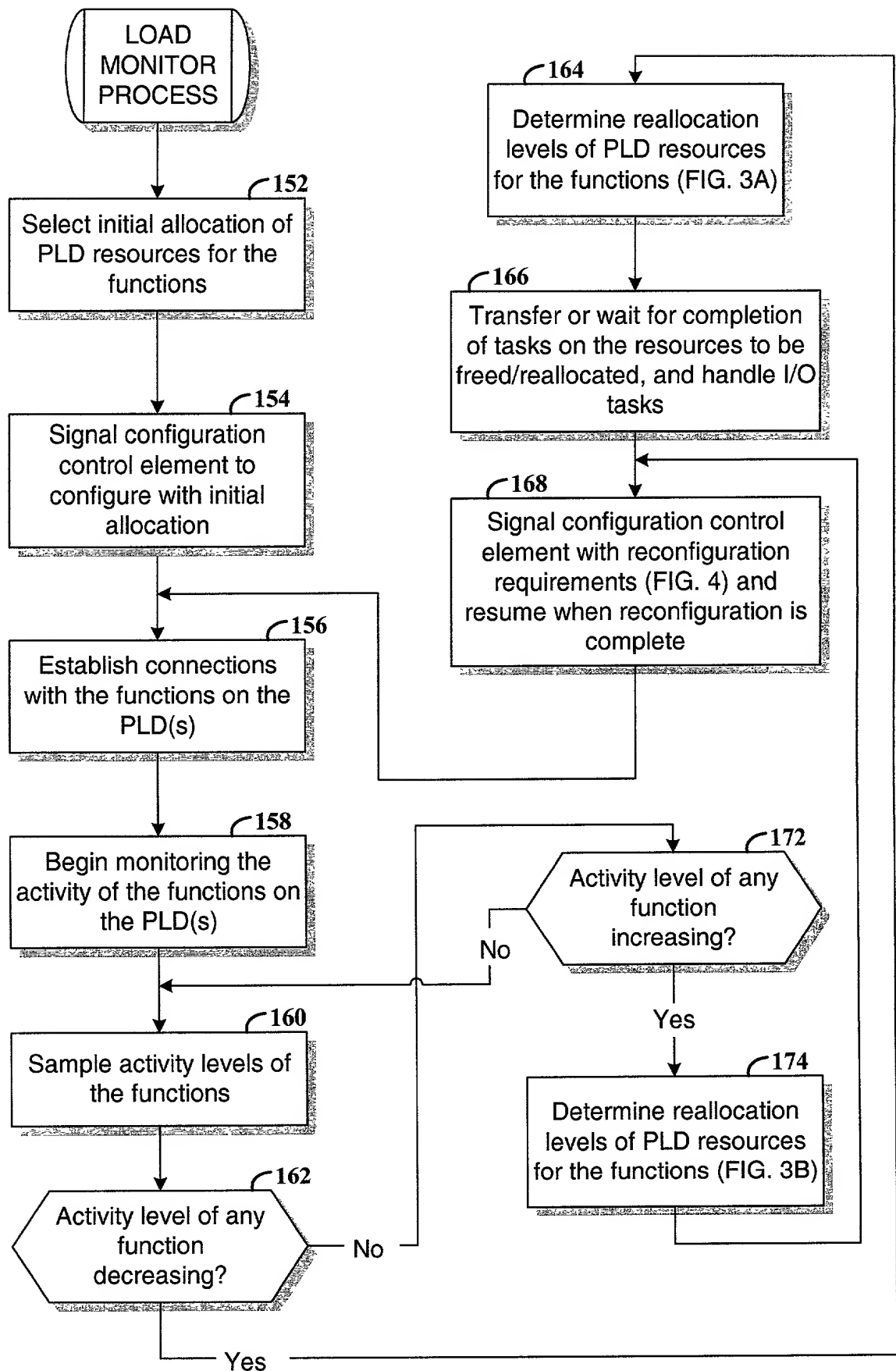


FIG. 2

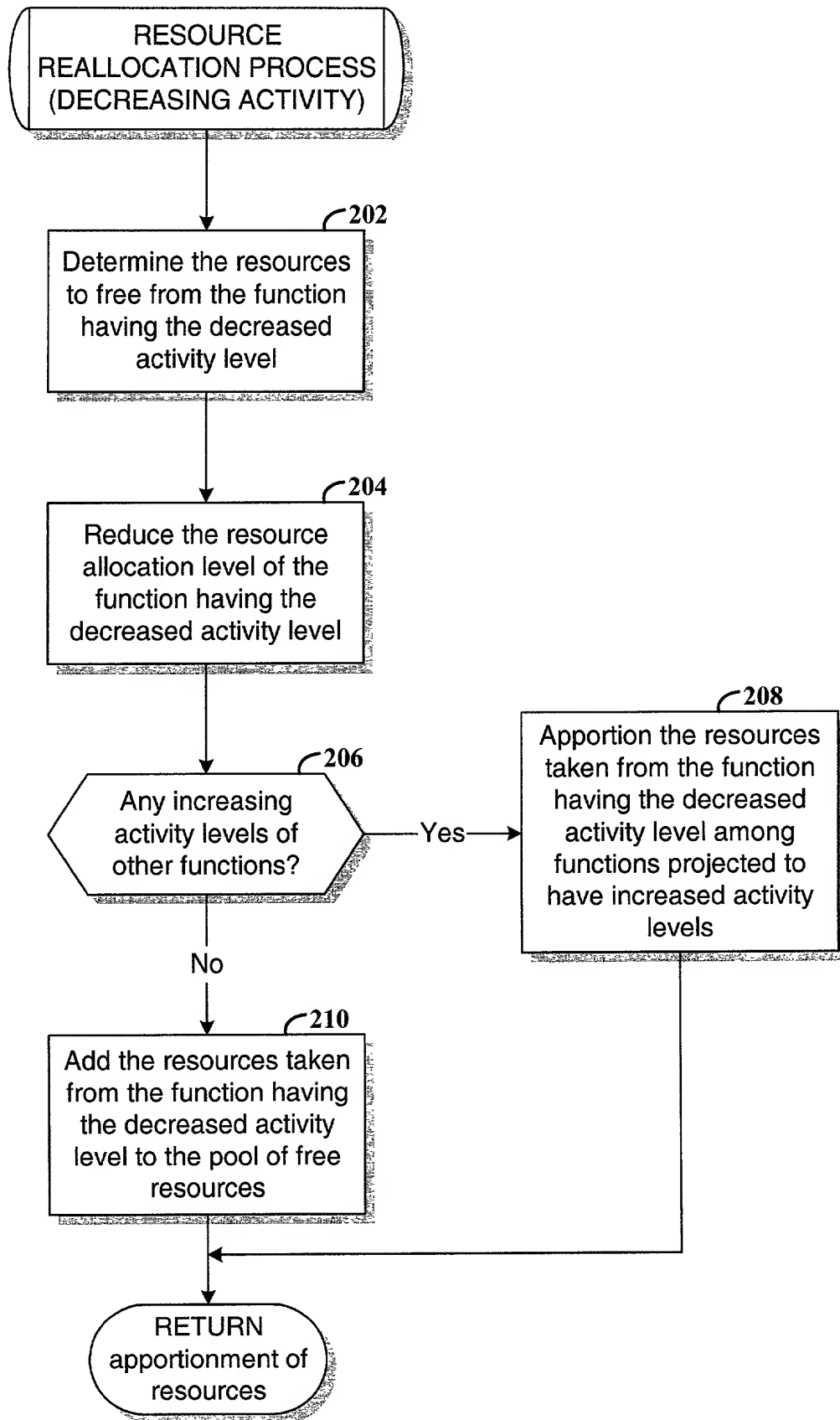


FIG. 3A

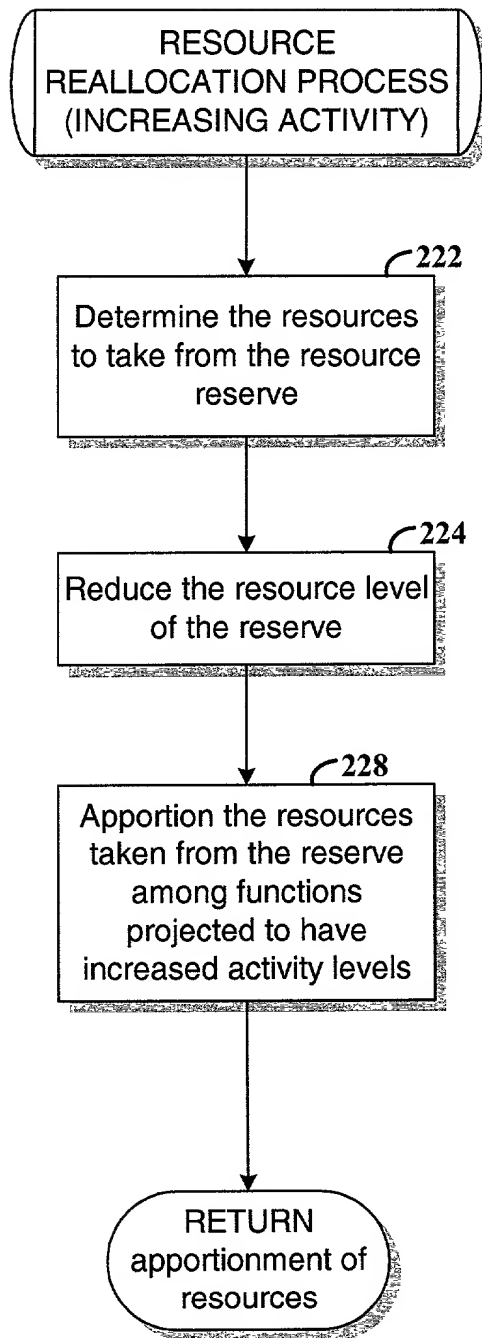


FIG. 3B

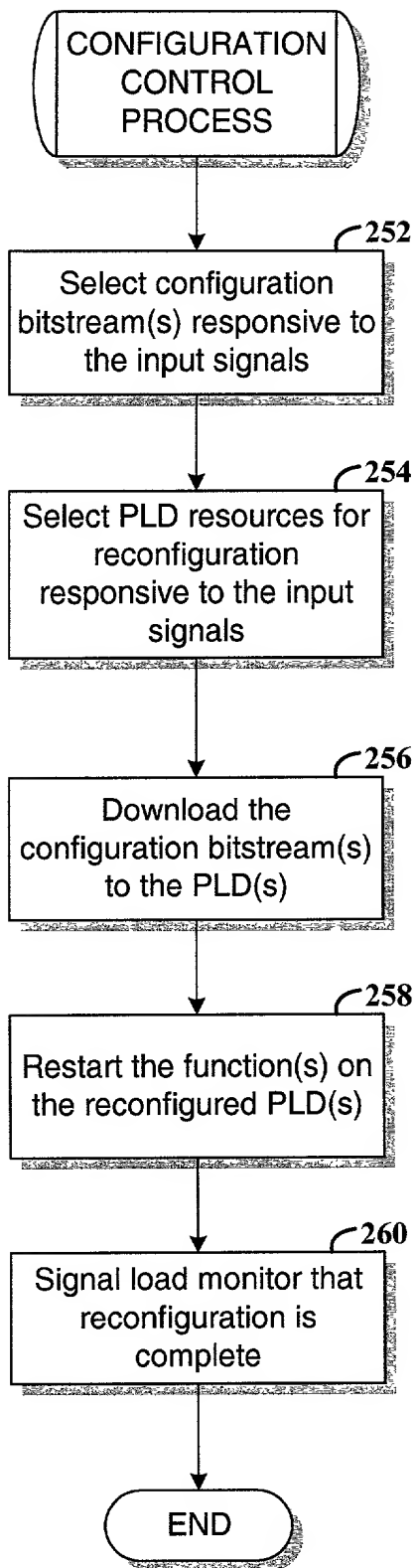


FIG. 4

DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below adjacent to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of subject matter (process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or an improvement thereof) that is disclosed and/or claimed and for which a patent is solicited by way of the application entitled

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR RUNTIME REALLOCATION OF PLD RESOURCES

which (check)

- ☒ is attached hereto.
☐ and is amended by the Preliminary Amendment attached hereto.
☐ was filed on _____ as Application Serial No. _____.
☐ and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified application, including the claims, including portions amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56(a).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under title 35, United States Code, § 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s)			Priority Claimed	
			Yes	No
(Number)	(Country)	(Day/Month/Year Filed)		
(Number)	(Country)	(Day/Month/Year Filed)	Yes	No

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below

(Application Number(s))	(Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY))

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as any subject matter of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application(s) and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

(Application Serial No.)	(Filing Date)	(Status-patented, pending, abandoned)
(Application Serial No.)	(Filing Date)	(Status-patented, pending, abandoned)

I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the United States Patent and Trademark Office connected herewith:

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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Title 18, United States Code, § 1001 and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

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Inventor's signature _____ Date _____

Residence _____ Citizenship _____

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EMY:mom